



CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

DATE: April 29, 2002

SUBJECT: Impact of Off-Campus Student Housing

The Planning Department participated this year with the Sharpe Community Partnership Program at the College of William and Mary. According to the College, "The Sharpe Community Partnership is residential program that extends William and Mary's long-held tradition of public and community service. Nurturing both responsible citizenship and energetic involvement in the community is part of the College's mission. In the spirit of our mission and traditions, students who participate will live in Sharpe residences, enroll in program-sponsored seminars, take part in public forums, and work on community projects – all as a way of encouraging first year students to explore issues in our national life and to become directly involved in these issues through public service."

The project for the Planning Department was on the impact of off-campus student housing, as described below:

William and Mary students are an important part of the community, and make up 50% of the City's population. Where students live, and particularly where they live off-campus, has impacts on City neighborhoods, parking, traffic, etc. This project will let the City know more about student preferences for off-campus housing, and in turn give the study team a knowledge of City planning issues, and how college students and the City's full time residents interact. Specifically, the students will look at the type and location of on- and off-campus student housing, location of bus routes and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, how off-campus housing relates to existing and proposed transportation systems, what students look for in off-campus housing, the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords, the impact of student housing on existing neighborhoods, and how City regulations affect off-campus housing.

Freshman students Peter Baxter, Dallas Sicay and Jonathan Whittlesey were the project team, assisted by Sharpe Fellow Steve Lipscomb, a senior. We met weekly at the Planning Department over the past year developing the study, and the students gave a presentation at the April 17 Planning Commission meeting to summarize their findings. A copy of their presentation is attached. This will be important information for the City to use as it continues to deal with the impacts of student housing on the community.

Reed T. Nester
Planning Director